

BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION ON CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE
Minutes of the October 12, 2007, Meeting
Rancho Mirage, California

Justice Carlos R. Moreno, chair, called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. on Friday, October 12, 2007, at the Rancho Las Palmas in Rancho Mirage, California.

Commission Members Present: Hon. Carlos R. Moreno (chair), Ms. Mary L. Ault, Dr. Jill Duerr Berrick, Mr. Curtis L. Child, Ms. Miryam J. Choca, Mr. Joseph W. Cotchett, Jr., Hon. Kathryn Doi Todd, Hon. Leonard P. Edwards (Ret.), Mr. Robert E. Friend, Hon. Richard D. Huffman, Hon. Susan D. Huguenor, Ms. Miriam A. Krinsky, Mr. Will Lightbourne, Ms. Donna C. Myrow, Ms. Diane Nunn, Mr. John O'Toole, Mr. Ken Patterson, Mr. Jonathan Pearson, Ms. Linda Penner, Ms. Patricia S. Ploehn, Mr. Joseph L. Spaeth, Hon. Dean Stout, and Ms. Jacqueline Wong.

Commission Members Not Present: Mr. Michael D. Antonovich, Hon. Karen Bass, Hon. Richard C. Blake, Mr. Lawrence B. Bolton, Mr. Michael S. Cunningham, Mr. Raul A. Escatel, Ms. Deborah Escobedo, Hon. Terry B. Friedman, Ms. Teri Kook, Ms. Amy Lemley, Hon. Bill Maze, Hon. Michael Nash, Mr. David Neilsen, Mr. Derek Peake, Mr. Anthony Pico, Ms. Maria D. Robles, Mr. Gary C. Seiser, Mr. Alan Slater, and Hon. Darrell Steinberg.

Commission and Administrative Office of the Courts Staff Present: Mr. Christopher Wu (lead), Ms. Carolyn C. Bernabe, Ms. Megan Lafrenz, Ms. Catherine Lam, Mr. David Meyers, Ms. Marymichael Miatovich, Mr. Lee D. Morhar, Ms. Chantal Sampogna, Ms. Sonya Tafoya, Mr. Don Will, and Ms. Leah Wilson.

Others Present: Ms. Susan Genovese, Ms. My Huynh, Ms. Laura Nielsen, and Ms. Heather Sharp.

Item 1 Opening Remarks From the Chair, Updates, and Review of Next 18 Months

Justice Carlos R. Moreno, Chair

Justice Carlos R. Moreno welcomed commissioners and participants to the eighth meeting of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care. He gave brief opening remarks and an introduction about the day's agenda. Mr. Christopher Wu gave a snapshot update of events of recent months and a more extensive review of where the commission is headed in the next 18 months. The commission will start discussing specific and concrete draft recommendations and in December will draft final recommendations. The last formal commission meeting is planned for June 2008.

The recommendations will be shared with each subcommittee, and all recommendations will be reviewed by staff. The commission must have a discussion about making politically viable and fiscally responsible recommendations.

Justice Moreno announced the extension of the commission's lifetime through June 2009 and enumerated why it is important to extend the commission's lifetime:

1. **The commission will be able to share its recommendations in draft form before finalizing them.** The commission's plan is to release draft recommendations in early 2008 in order to allow for a 60-day public comment period. This will enable the commission to share its recommendations with key constituencies and then integrate any critical feedback and suggestions before submitting final proposals to the Judicial Council in August.
2. **The members will be able to fully participate as active, sitting commissioners during this critical, 60-day public comment period, as well as in future public education and outreach activities.** This period of dialogue is a critical step to the eventual implementation of final recommendations and will help the commission engage the various agencies and stakeholders that must collaborate to better support children and families.
3. **The commission will be able to take advantage of the Judicial Council's legislative cycle if the council decides to sponsor legislation.** The commission wants its recommendations to be politically viable. If the Judicial Council decides to sponsor legislation in order to implement commission recommendations, the members will be well positioned as an active, sitting commission to support any legislation.
4. **Commissioners will be able to stay involved during early implementation of their recommendations.** Retaining an active, sitting commission has advantages for implementation. As those involved in various communities and constituencies, commissioners have the standing and respect in their communities to help encourage and implement commission proposals. That standing should be leveraged by extending commission appointments during this critical window of opportunity.

The commission will make recommendations to the Judicial Council for possible legislation, rules of court, and changes in policy and practice guidelines.

Justice Moreno and Mr. Wu thanked the commissioners, subcommittee chairs, and the subcommittee staff for all the work done in the subcommittees.

Item 2 Finalization of Subcommittee Draft Recommendations

Subcommittees looked at the subcommittee recommendations that have been developed over the past months and identified broad themes.

Item 3 Dinner Panel From Social Workers Symposia

Ms. Susan Genovese, Ms. My Huynh, Ms. Laura Nielsen, and Ms. Heather Sharp; AOC staff: Ms.Carolynn C. Bernabe and Ms. Sonya Tafoya

Materials were handed out containing some of the comments and quotes of the representative from the stakeholder groups that the AOC has interviewed. They included testimony of youth from the Sacramento public hearing in March.

The court stakeholder groups included social workers, birth parents, foster parents, relative caregivers, Spanish-speaking parents, and Spanish-speaking relative caregivers. These groups were invited to give feedback about their experiences in the court process so that the commission can consider their perspective as it works on recommendations.

The focus of the panel was on the social worker's group. Four outstanding social workers participated in the social worker group discussion and presented some of the themes, issues, and recommendations that they came up with.

Sonya Tafoya moderated the panel. The dinner meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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Mr. Christopher Wu, executive director, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 13, 2007, at the Rancho Las Palmas in Rancho Mirage, California. Justice Huffman help lead throughout the meeting.

Commission Members Present: Ms. Mary L. Ault, Dr. Jill Duerr Berrick, Mr. Curtis L. Child, Ms. Miryam J. Choca, Hon. Kathryn Doi Todd, Hon. Leonard P. Edwards (Ret.), Mr. Robert E. Friend, Hon. Richard D. Huffman, Hon. Susan D. Huguenor, Ms. Miriam A. Krinsky, Mr. Will Lightbourne, Ms. Donna C. Myrow, Ms. Diane Nunn, Mr. John O'Toole, Mr. Ken Patterson, Ms. Linda Penner, Ms. Patricia S. Ploehn, Mr. Joseph L. Spaeth, Hon. Dean Stout, and Ms. Jacqueline Wong.

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Commission and Administrative Office of the Courts Staff Present: Mr. Christopher Wu (lead), Ms. Carolynn C. Bernabe, Ms. Megan Lafrenz, Ms. Catherine Lam, Mr. David Meyers, Ms. Marymichael Miatovich, Mr. Lee D. Morhar, Ms. Chantal Sampogna, Ms. Sonya Tafoya, Mr. Don Will, and Ms. Leah Wilson.

**Item 1 Subcommittee Discussion of Recommendations of Other
Subcommittees and Commission Discussion of Subcommittee Draft
Recommendations**

The commission broke into its respective groups to look at its recommendations and the recommendations that came out of the other subcommittees to see the whole picture. Each group reported back with its recommendations and next steps.

Item 2 Closing Remarks

Justice Huffman and Mr. Wu thanked the commissioners for their dedication in working on their recommendations and thanked the staff for all their work on the commission. The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.